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AUTHOR La Forge, Paul G.
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ABSTRACT

Charles A. Curran has developed a radically different type of language learning by dealing with the learners as a group rather than as a class. The social learning relationships of a class differ from a group in the contract, the social milieu, in the relationships between the teacher and students, and among the students themselves. Curran called this approach "Community Language Learning" (CLL). CLL is student-centered language learning which takes place in supportive group experience and reflection. This method was used to teach English to students in a Japanese educational situation both in the classroom and in extracurricular activities over a three-year period (1971-1974). The major finding was that CLL is adaptable to Japanese culture. Three reasons are given: (1) if affective problems connected with language learning are handled and solved, the cognitive aspects of language are more easily dealt with; (2) CLL group activity fits into the educational and cultural traditions of Japan; and (3) CLL language learning relies upon reflection, part of the cultural heritage of Japan. (Author/CFM)

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Community Language Learning: Findings Based on Three Years of Research in Japan (1971—1974) *

Paul G. La Forge

A fresh approach to language learning was proposed by Charles A. Curran (1972) of Loyola University of Chicago, who dealt with the language learning class not as a class at all, but as a language learning group. Both the class and the group are interpersonal situations, but the social dynamics which occur in the interpersonal relationships of a group differ from those of a class. A different set of social learning relationships are involved. The social learning relationships of a class differ from a group in the contract, in the social milieu, in the relationship between teacher and students, and in the relationships among the students themselves.

The student-teacher relationship of a class is different from that of a group. The main activity of the class consists of oral drilling which is performed by the teacher. Knowledge of the language is dispensed by the teacher to the students, who try to absorb the oral drills in class. After class, the students retire to their textbooks, memorize the basic sentence patterns word for word, and master the language in isolated study. As a social process, language learning

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takes place on a single vertical dimension from teacher to students. In this sense, present-day language teaching is textbook and teacher centered.

The relationships among students in a class are different from those of a group. Students have to study for examinations, which are graded on a curve. Those who are in competition with each other for a higher grade on the curve, become winners or losers in the learning game. Others suffer anxiety in the competition and, fearing failure and rejection, become apathetic and are inclined to withdraw from learning. In the class, little attention is given to the needs of the students for a shared group learning experience free from competition or for a supportive type of learning, which is communicated from student to student.

Thirdly, the milieu of a class is different from a group. Some students develop a fairly high commitment to learning in the teacher-centered, competitive language learning class, but others seek to escape from as much learning as possible. Basically, parts of the class are at war with other parts. The teacher spends much time and energy in keeping the dissonant parts of the class in some degree of harmony. Differences gradually take on the form of social forces which may serve to protect the less committed students and punish those who show some zeal in learning. Bradford (1960: 74) has described the social dynamics in the classroom as follows:

> "Needless struggle takes place between teacher and students as to who shall learn and what; desirable concomitant learning goals are not realized; and students build barriers to present and future learning and frequently end up with lasting anxieties and undesirable attitudes toward education."

Lastly, the contract of a class is different from that of a group. By "contract", I mean the motives and expectations of the people who agree to engage in some form of activity together, i.e. such as language learning. The motives of the teacher and students are not considered as a part of the class learning process. The students are questioned about their motives only as an afterthought – if they are performing poorly in class or on examinations. The teacher's

motives for proposing class activities are never questioned.

The teacher enters the class with the expectation that students will grasp every activity which he proposes. If the students do not grasp the activity, the teacher becomes discouraged or even angry. His expectations of the class have not been fulfilled. If the students do not learn the language, they too become discouraged because their goals for learning have not been met. Because neither the expectations of the teacher nor those of the students are realized in the class learning relationship, both end up frustrated and angry. One of the main difficulties of the class is that the motives, the goals, and the expectations of the students and teacher are not discussed in their language learning relationship. In short, there is no forum for the discussion of the language learning contract in the class.

Charles A. Curran developed a radically different type of language learning by dealing with the learners as a group rather than as a class. Curran's (1961) model was derived from counseling Psychology. In using a group counseling model, a new set of social relationships were employed in language learning. Because the learning experiences were based on and supported by the social dynamics of a group, Curran (1972) called his new approach "Community Language Learning" (hereafter CLL). CLL is student-centered language learning which takes place in supportive group experience and reflection. The following are some characteristics of CLL compared with other approaches to language teaching.

First of all, CLL is student-centered language learning. This implies a different type of relationship with the teacher. Curran (1966) showed that language learning was not a mere cognitive process. Learners reacted in varying degrees of anxiety to the threat of a language expert or teacher. In fact, the greater the expertise of the teacher, the greater the threat that was perceived by the learners. When the threat surrounding the teacher was diminished, the students showed a greater acceptance of the language learning relationship. In social dynamic terms, the CLL counselor or teacher relates to the whole group on a primary vertical dimension of the social interaction. On a secondary vertical dimension of the social interaction, the counselor relates to each individual in the group, in

so far as he contacts each individual. Social interaction also takes place among the group members themselves on a horizontal dimension. In the context of a CLL group, language learning occurs on all of these social dimensions. The group interaction supports the language learning process. This is what Curran meant by social dynamics in service of language pedagogy. The social-dynamics of CLL are more explicit than those of a class. Learning also takes place on wider social dimensions in a CLL group than in a class.

In the CLL group, the responsibility for the learning remains with the student. The CLL teacher sets up an English speaking experience for the students. However, he does not suggest topics for discussion. In the counseling situation, the subject matter of the counseling hour is determined by the client. In the CLL group, creating a subject for discussion is the responsibility of the students. The teacher operates as a facilitator of the group action, but he does not force the response of the students. Each student participates in the learning experience according to his own free choice and in his own time.

In the CLL class, there are no teacher-centered pattern practice drills. Recently, these have been termed as harmful to language learning by Corbluth (1974). Language drilling produces meager results, especially for intermediate and advanced students. With mechanical drilling, liveliness and interest quickly give way to fatigue and boredom. What students need, according to Corbluth (1974: 124), is a wide and deep experience of English in use.

Secondly, CLL is language learning. Curran (1972: 123–135) compared development in language proficiency to the birth and growth of a new self in language learning. He proposed five stages of growth from the perfect dependency of childhood to the independence of the adult stage. The five stages reflect the psychological experience of the student as he progresses in the language. In stage I, the embryonic stage, the student is completely dependent upon the teacher for anything he wants to say in the foreign language. The client speaks first in his native language. The counselor repeats the message in the foreign language. The client repeats his own sentence, imitating the counselor, in the foreign language.

As he begins to pick up the language, the client moves into stage

II, the self-assertive stage. He begins to use simple phrases independently. Increasingly, the client picks up expressions that he has heard from others in the group. The client uses them to his own great personal satisfaction. In stage III, the separate existence stage, individuals begin to function in the foreign language without the use of the native language. They also begin to resent the intervention of the counselor when help is needed. As the learner's capacity unfolds, he often needs to assert his own unique way of speaking the foreign language in a strong and forceful manner. The counselor must be aware of this and accept it as inherent in the learning process if he is to help the learner at this stage.

Stage IV, the reversal stage, represents a crucial transition in the teaching relationship. It might be considered a kind of adolescence. If the learner is to acquire further refinements in the foreign language, he must begin to create an atmosphere of understanding and acceptance for the counselor. The roles have to be interchanged. The learner has to understand the counselor in his need to teach. Otherwise, the counselor, out of fear of offending the learner, tends to become increasingly hesitant about giving further knowledge of the foreign language. The burden of the psychological understanding shifts to the learners. They must make it possible for the teacher to communicate refined knowledge of the foreign language.

In stage V, the independent adult stage, the learner theoretically knows all that the knower has to teach. Although the student is independent, he may still need subtle refinements and corrections. The student is able to become a counselor to other members of the group who are less proficient. During the course of his activity in counseling, the student still receives further correction from the teacher.

Thirdly, CLL takes place in supportive group experience. In contrast to the class, where learning is centered around memorizing sentences from a textbook, CLL learning takes place in a group experience. The students learn in a supportive social situation by helping each other and exchanging information. Students learn by speaking together and not in isolated study. The current practice of isolating students in language learning booths of a laboratory has

come in for some severe criticism by Lindsay. He writes:

> "For some students there are serious psychological drawbacks in being isolated from the teacher and other students. They need the face-to-face relationships and stimulus of group work. Moreover, for most students there is the need to transfer correct language behavior from the lab to the more realistic communication of the classroom." (Lindsay 1973: 6)

Lastly, CLL takes place in supportive group reflection. At the end of every CLL session, time is provided to reflect upon the experience of the day. Students are allowed to comment upon the meaning of the experience. The discussion of the comments opens up untapped areas of the experience as it relates to the individual student and to the teacher. The motivation of the students is judged by their performance during the experience. The expectations of the teacher are also scrutinized. All the information is shared by the students and the teacher. The problems of the students in learning and those of the teacher in teaching come up for discussion during the reflection periods. Since expectations, goals, and motives are openly shared together, the learning contract becomes the focus of the group activity during the reflection periods. In a CLL group, the concern of both teacher and students is centered upon how the goal, proficiency in English, is being achieved by the class experience. This is what happens during a CLL reflection period.

The Social Dynamics of CLL in Japan

The purpose of the previous section was to show that CLL is a fresh approach to language learning. In this section, I shall proceed to illustrate the social dynamics of CLL in the Japanese educational situation both in the classroom and in extracurricular activities over the past three years. Research findings with CLL will be summarized in a third section.

Inside the Classroom. Inside the classroom, the following four developments took place in a CLL group over the course of a school

year. First, a great amount of anxiety in the presence of the teacher; Second, a demand for independence from the teacher; Third, a need for contact with the teacher; Fourth, greater security in the presence of the teacher. The four developments took place in the social dynamics which occurred as an ongoing learning relationship between the teacher and the students and among the students themselves.

The first development of CLL inside the Japanese classroom again confirmed a theoretical axiom of Curran (1968: 295): "Any discussion of the educative process has really to start with the relationship of conflict, hostility, anger and anxiety to learning." In previous research with CLL (La Forge 1975), a group of Spanish speaking adults reacted with great hostility to the introduction of CLL. By way of contrast, a group of female students at Nanzan Junior College reacted with a great amount of anxiety. The students were used to an educational environment on the secondary level which was overly intellectual and individualistic as described by Curran (1968: 295):

> "The 'good' student is still presumed to be able to learn best in an intellectualized and individual way, with little or no consideration given to his emotional somatic involvement or his need for a community learning experience shared with other students."

During senior high school, Japanese students spend much time memorizing complex English sentences and hundreds of English words. They are also preoccupied with the problem of preparation for university entrance examinations. However, even during six years of English study, they do not learn how to communicate with another English speaking person, especially with a foreigner. Since even the basic communication processes in English were lacking, it was necessary to give the students a psychological birth process with CLL in stage I. This was accomplished through a series of communication exercises in supportive small groups. The purpose of the small group activity was to give the student a basic self-identity and basic communication relationships in English with

others and with the social world outside the classroom.

Upon first contact with CLL, the students were caught in the dilemma of an anxiety conflict. On the one hand, they wanted the opportunity for free English speaking afforded by a CLL group. On the other hand, their anxiety in a free situation was so great that they could not speak. They had no confidence in themselves as speakers of English. Although they had studied English in a cognitive way, they had no psychological identity with English in an affective way. Recently, Brown has suggested that self-confidence and self-identity may be important variables in language learning. He writes:

> "A second factor related to the thinking and feeling organism is the 'Ego'. The self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence of the language learner could have everything to do with success in learning a language . . . . . ."
> "Any language acquisition process that results in meaningful learning for communication involves some degree of identity conflict regardless of the age and motivation of the learners." (Brown 1973: 233)

For the purpose of increasing the self-confidence and self-identity of the students as speakers of English, the first semester was spent in small group activity. Exercises such as self-introduction, group questions and answers, statements and reactions, and relating experiences were set up between groups of students. The use of Japanese as an aid to establishing an English identity was permitted. For instance, the student was allowed the use of Japanese as she consulted with her peer group. Together with her peers, she prepared her self-introduction which was presented to the whole class in English. In order to achieve communication in English between groups, each student had to prepare a question in English. The question was presented to another group. Someone in the other group had to stand up and reply. Some independence was achieved in the next step. Each student prepared an English statement. The statement was presented to another group. Someone in the other group had to react by way of agreement, disagreement,

or with a question.

A communication in English with the social world outside the classroom was achieved with the following exercise. A single question was directed to the whole class: "What did you do last Sunday afternoon?". Each student had to prepare her answer with the help of the small group. She presented her answer to the whole class in English. After a semester of this kind of group activity, the students spoke as representatives who were not completely independent of their groups. A measure of self-confidence and affective identity with English was in evidence at CLL stages I and II.

With a growth in self-confidence, came the demand for independence. Contact with the teacher was accepted with reluctance. Preference for the security of the small group persisted. As the students showed signs of self-assertion and the desire for separate existence of CLL stages II and III, the teacher withdrew from the class activity. The students were allowed to speak English in small groups by themselves. They were able to progress by using the English which they had learned previously. A variety of topics, freely chosen by the students, were discussed in the small groups.

The third development was the need of the group for contact with the teacher. During the reflection periods after the small group activity, the psychological contract came under discussion. As evidence of stage IV learning became apparent, the students realized that some understanding of the role of the teacher was necessary if they were to make further progress in English. The disadvantages of the small group activity were pointed out by the students themselves. First of all, contact with the teacher was cut off. English mistakes were repeated. It was difficult to learn new English expressions from other students. Worse still, English was spoken, at the most, about eighty percent of the time spent in the small groups. If progress was to be made in English, contact with the teacher had to be reestablished even at some cost in effort.

In order to meet the need of the students for contact with the teacher, the class was divided into larger units of ten to fifteen students. A ten-minute period of free English conversation was held with each group. The role of the teacher, who was present in the group, was to show the students how to struggle with the problems

of anxiety and silence. The teacher suggested that the silence could be broken by asking another person a simple question, commenting upon the uneasiness in the group, or even making meaningless remarks about a banal topic such as the weather. The students were left free to decide which of these suggestions to pursue. Topics for discussion were not suggested. The students were challenged to develop in the independence of CLL stages III, IV, and V. In response, the students accepted the responsibility for the content of the conversations and struggled together to make the time a useful English speaking experience.

The fourth development was a greater amount of security with the teacher. The threat of the large group activity diminished during the course of discussion which took place in the reflection periods. Once the anxiety was shared by all the members of the class, it quickly evaporated. The supportive communication among the students gave rise to a greater understanding of the helpful role of the teacher. By this time, the role reversal of stage IV had taken place. The students seemed prepared for Stage V practice, which consisted of handling a one-to-one English speaking relationship.

The idea for the activity was derived from Japanese culture. In the Japanese Judo hall, the members form two lines for "Feinting Practice" (*Uchikomi*) and "Wrestling Practice" (*Randori*). During feinting practice, the members make gestures of attack about ten or twenty times, then the partners are changed. For wrestling practice, the members engage in a practice wrestling session for three minutes. Then the partners are changed.

For the *Randori-Uchikomi* or face-to face group practice, the class was arranged in two lines. Each student spoke with her partner for three minutes, then all the partners were changed. The activity lasted for forty-five minutes. In effect each student was "wrestling" with an English conversation (*Randori*). The teacher also participated in the English speaking activity. However, due to time limitations, it was impossible to speak with each and every member of the class. A gesture (*Uchikomi*) was made by the teacher to contact each student in a simulated interview situation. During the reflection periods following the face-to-face group activity, students made three comments: First, the joy of getting to know every

member of the class; Secondly, the chance to use English in a flexible and creative way in a number of situations which were similar; Thirdly, the confidence in a one-to-one speaking relationship with the teacher. It was also noticed that forty-five minutes of intensive English speaking activity left the students physically exhausted.

As an ongoing dynamic social learning process, English knowledge was communicated on a primary vertical dimension between teacher and students in the large group activity. Communication of English also occurred on a secondary vertical dimension between the teacher and the individual in the face-to-face group. On a horizontal dimension, English was communicated among students in the small group activity. The social dimensions of CLL learning inside the Japanese classroom were much wider than in a class, as described previously. Learning based on the social dynamics of the interaction gave rise to a more supportive milieu in the CLL group than in the class. Competition for test grades was eliminated by requiring periodic reports about the students' activities, interests, or their attitudes toward the CLL class.

Extracurricular Activities: CLL "Discipline". Outside the classroom, CLL was used for over a year to assist a group of junior and senior high school students to advance in English conversation. CLL provided a "Disciplina" for the activities of an English speaking club. By "Disciplina" is not meant the resort to punishments to fulfill the commands of a teacher, but a learning atmosphere which engages the whole person of the learner as a part of his life space. A taste of American culture was provided by the teacher in the CLL "Disciplina" (hereafter, Discipline). Japanese students were given a chance to learn something which could not be gotten from textbooks. For instance, they learned how to use the telephone in English. Interviews or visits to the families of foreigners were arranged by the teacher. Curran has described the CLL discipline as follows:

> "In its Latin context, 'disciplina' was not only what was learned, but the whole personal learning experience itself. It

implied an internalizing of what was learned and the self-control necessary to bring about fruition in the person himself. This is quite different from an external conformity to the teacher's ideas, or an ability to reproduce knowledge when demanded by competition or testing." (Curran 1972: 22)

The discipline for CLL English speaking activity took place in a Japanese social context. In terms of social dynamics, the Japanese culture reinforced the CLL discipline for English speaking and added cultural mechanisms which greatly enhanced the language learning experiences.

The discipline for CLL activity took place in the school club which is a unique Japanese sociocultural entity with no analogue in the American school. Clubs, fraternities, and sororities in an American school are meant for social entertainment. The English club members of Nanzan Junior and Senior High School were seriously interested in mastering English conversation even after a full day of classes and seven hours of English a week. The club is a tight-knit social unit which enjoys public recognition in the school. Clubs, which include extracurricular sports groups, function throughout the whole school year. During the off-season, the members remain together and engage in some form of activity related to the purpose of the club. The baseball team of a Japanese school, for instance, can be seen in full uniform performing calisthenics during the winter time. Such a thing would not be seen in an American school. Activities in an American school are organized around the seasons of the year. During the off-season, the loosely organized group is disbanded.

The Japanese culture provided a hierarchy system by which the younger learn from the older members of the club. At the top of the hierarchy was an English speaking world where the teacher and the older students, who formed a CLL discipline, were in constant contact during CLL activities. The English knowledge and the decisions made in the English speaking world were passed down the hierarchy and accepted by the younger students. On an outing in the country, for instance, the older students and the teacher made all the arrangements. During a two-hour bus ride, one senior high

school student sat with a group of junior high school students. He was teaching different kinds of English expressions for the entire trip. The younger students listened for the whole time without objection. This is how the CLL discipline for English speaking was reinforced by the Japanese hierarchy system, which is a cultural mechanism.

Part of the cultural mechanism of the Japanese club is the annual *Gasshuku* . The Japanese term *Gasshuku* can perhaps be equated to the English word "Camp-In". However, the *Gasshuku* is in no sense as frivolous an affair as a Camp-In. The *Gasshuku* is undertaken by every club as a serious social learning activity. The members leave home and environment, reside together, and engage in their social learning activity. The cultural mechanism of the *Gasshuku* very narrowly restricts the activities of its members. A swimming club, for instance, would violate its *Gasshuku* by allowing its members a daily softball game. The length of the *Gasshuku* may vary from a single day to an entire week. The English club *Gasshuku*, which was held on two different occasions, lasted a single day.

The discipline for CLL activity was strengthened by the cultural mechanism of the *Gasshuku*. English speaking was more rigorously enforced. During the *Gasshuku*, it became a norm of social conduct sanctioned by a ritualistic system of rewards and punishments. When the group norm was violated by a member, who even inadvertently spoke Japanese, a fine of ten yen had to be paid. The culprit had to bow three times before the punishment box which was decorated and displayed in a prominent place. The culprit was also required to apologize to the group for the violation. A sigh of relief ran through the group as the member paid his fine in expiation for his fault. The collective sense of guilt for the violation of the individual was lifted from the group. The punishment money was used to purchase awards for the outstanding performance of those who took part in the other English speaking activities of the *Gasshuku*. In previous research with CLL, Tranel (1968) also found, as an outstanding characteristic of a CLL group, the sense that the whole group felt itself responsible for the conduct of an individual member.

One of the most dramatic impressions of the *Gasshuku* was the mechanism of silence provided for the CLL English speaking activities. The group members were busy preparing speeches. They were seated around a table and maintained silence for over an hour. The *Gasshuku* reinforced the discipline of CLL for speaking, but in addition, it imposed a mechanism of silence. Activity in silence is an essential characteristic of every *Gasshuku*. This silent activity took the form of a rest period during a Judo *Gasshuku* in which I once participated. However, even during the period of silent rest, the members were engaged in reflection, recuperation, or preparing their minds for the next group activity. In terms of social dynamics, an important development of the Japanese *Gasshuku* in relation to CLL English learning is that from the depths of the silence, which the *Gasshuku* imposes on its members, flows their ability to speak in English.

The reactions of the Japanese students and their activity during the silence of the *Gasshuku* were entirely different from other national groups. For Japanese, silence is not a vacuous period of time. It is full of life, vigor, and meaning. The silence was all the more striking because the students were at ease and working. By kinesthetic communication – the rattling of papers, the sound of writing, an occasional cough, the shifting of body position – the members conveyed to each other the message that they were busy performing the group activity. They were preparing their English speeches. At the end of the silent period, each member delivered a very good speech in English.

In addition to fewer periods of silence, a Spanish speaking CLL group also learned from the experience of silence, but in a different way. The Spanish speakers at the University of Michigan were irked by the silence and, before long, they were engaged in vehement argumentation with each other. Usually, these arguments occurred between two people. The other members of the group would listen in silence. At times, the listeners would make comments upon the humorous aspects of the situation. Conversation was stimulated, but the vehemence was also kept within the bounds of a learning situation.

Americans tended to grow very anxious when periods of silence

occurred during a CLL group session. The need for silence certainly was there because periods of silence invariably occurred. During the silence, American members of a CLL group began to repeat the sentences of the foreign language (Japanese on one occasion), which they had heard other members of the group say previously. In other words, to fill the periods of silence, the members of an American CLL group drilled themselves in the foreign language. They learned from the experience of silence, but in a manner different from the Japanese or Spanish groups.

The Spanish, American, and Japanese groups all learned a second language, but in a different relationship to the silence. The extracurricular activity with CLL in the English club and the *Gasshuku* shows the effectiveness of a learning situation, a small-group community making full use of domestic cultural mechanisms, which involve the whole personality and lifespace of the individual. The dynamic relationship between silence and foreign language learning was clarified as a result of the effects of the *Gasshuku* on all who took part in it.

CONCLUSION: CLL IS ADAPTIVE TO JAPANESE CULTURE

The major finding of the last three years is that CLL is adaptive to the Japanese cultural situation. There are several reasons for this. First, after six years of English study on the secondary level, Japanese students have built up a vast cognitive reservoir of English knowledge. When this cognitive reservoir of English is tapped on the affective level with CLL, progress in speaking English occurs rapidly and even dramatically. This research shows that if the affective problems connected with language learning are handled and solved, the cognitive aspects of language are more easily dealt with. On the secondary level of education in Japan, efforts to lay a cognitive base for English are not a failure. If it were not for the effectiveness of English teaching in Junior and Senior High School, the urge for independent speaking experience in English would not have been so strong among the students.

Secondly, CLL activity occurs in groups. Before the arrival of the modern school in the Meiji Era, education of youth in Japan was carried on in small groups around a teacher. CLL fits into this

cultural tradition. During the course of CLL group activity, students form an affective identity with the English language. Their self-confidence increases to such an extent that those who have achieved CLL stages IV and V can be corrected during the CLL group experience without undue disturbance. In spite of the intervention of the teacher to correct grammar or pronunciation mistakes, the flow of the conversation is not interrupted. If the attention of the students is focused on communication of meaning both in experience and reflection, little time is necessary for correcting grammatical and pronunciation mistakes.

Third, CLL language learning relies upon reflection, a cultural heritage that can be readily found in Japan. Over the period of a school year, Japanese was gradually replaced by English during the reflection periods. A substantial part of the class time was spent in talking about an English speaking experience in English. The use of English during the reflection periods clearly underlined the reality of English as a part of daily living. Research with CLL suggests that during the reflection period, the individual enters into the basic speaking experience, assesses it, and integrates it into his personality structure. Without changing the methodology in use, English teaching activities could be improved by the introduction of a reflection period at the end of each class. A forum for the discussion of the social dynamic factors in the class would aid the language learning process.

The reflection period makes explicit the underlying motivational factors and personality variables which foster or hinder the language learning process. Japanese students were given a chance to comment upon the class experiences by way of reflection. They were helped in a special way through two psychological crises: The first was the anxiety conflict of stage I; the second was the dependency crisis of stages III and IV. During the reflection period, the need for courage in English speaking became clear to the students who were prevented by anxiety from expressing themselves. With the sharing of the mutual anxiety, arose a group resolution to struggle together toward the goal of English proficiency. Anxiety was replaced by hope and confidence. The psychological birth in Stage I occurred during the discussions of the reflection periods. The crisis of

adolescence was resolved by a discussion of the role of the teacher. A greater understanding of the role of the teacher helped to bring about progress from stage III to stage IV. After the resolution of the adolescent crisis of stage IV, students were able to increase their independence in English without rejecting the help of the teacher.

Reference has been made to the cognitive aspects of English speaking, to correct grammar and pronunciation. Until the students reached stages IV and V, the teacher was somewhat restricted in dealing with these important aspects of English during the CLL experience. This restriction did not hold for the reflection period. During the reflection period, the teacher was free to deal with the cognitive aspects of English by way of grammatical explanation, correction of mistakes, or more refined expression of English. If backed up by data from the comments of the students, confrontation of poor performance could be more effectively handled as a group problem.

Reflection is important for another reason. In terms of social dynamics, the class parts – experience and reflection – are drawn together into a meaningful whole which has a personal reference to the student. This happens in the individual class and over a whole series of CLL sessions. The students compare their English gains from the large and small groups, for instance, with those of the face-to-face group. They focus on their English progress over a month or a semester. In this way, the student takes a longterm view of his English education. Since the information is shared with the class during the reflection period, the teacher receives feedback on the effect of the English speaking activities. He receives an insight into the problems of the students. Decisions based on this data can be made in regard to the type of activities from which the class will derive the most benefit.

Lastly, reflection is important because it is a cultural learning mechanism of Japanese society. Every social or working group in Japan sets aside a period for reflection at some time during the course of its activity. Reflection is considered necessary for the social function or learning progress of any group. The CLL reflection period fits into this Japanese cultural pattern. The club activity with its *Gasshuku* and the custom of reflection are

socio-cultural learning mechanisms of Japanese society, which seemingly have been overlooked in the past.

In conclusion, I would like to address an appeal to Japanese scholars to do more research in group dynamics, group Psychology, and the Sociology of language. With these tools, they can restudy and research Japanese society itself. Japanese society operates according to unique social dynamics – such as those of the club activity and the *Gasshuku*. These group dynamics can be put to work in service of modern education, as CLL has shown. More of these socio-educative mechanisms should be discovered by Japanese scholars and explained to the rest of the world. To my mind, the explanation of the unique social dynamics of Japanese society would represent a contribution of the highest quality to what is already known about group dynamics among scholars in the rest of the world.

I would like to appeal to English teachers, in particular, to become more aware of the psychological and sociolinguistic processes which occur in their classrooms. This is especially true at the senior high school and university levels of education. This is the time when personality growth is most rapid. Modern students need a living classroom experience in a certain amount of freedom. It is equally necessary to sit down with the students in reflection upon the psychological and sociolinguistic processes of the experience. Out of this reflection can come the confrontation of basic issues in education which are important for the personal growth and development of the students.

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